

Little Rock, Arkansas  
April 30 1969

Miss Elizabeth A. Pitt  
Care W. Y. C. A.  
Welland, Ontario.

Dear Miss Pitt;

I have for some time wondered about you, and addressed a letter to your last known address at Toronto. In the mean time I have received a communication from Mr. T. A. Johnston, Secretary of the Priory of the St. Johns Ambulance Association to the effect that you are now connected with the YWCA at Welland, hence this letter. To begin with, I am writing up my WW 11 memoirs and wanted to get an expression from you concerning our trip up the St. Lawrence on the good ship Jamaica Planter. As we were forbidden to make notes, I have to resort to my memory. It has now been about 27 years as you recall of this memorable trip and my recollection is somewhat hazy. Would you be kind enough Bess, to tell me something about the personnel of the members of your group and their present whereabouts. After leaving the ship at Oban Scotland, my experiences were many and varied. I had the pleasure of meeting my son, then a major at Rouen enroute to Germany. After that he was sent to Manila where he was placed on administrative duty for several years. After returning to the States, he has placed as commandant of the Presidio at San Francisco. He will now retire in July after 30 years service and go into the real estate business in Albuquerque N. Mex.

I seem to be going into detail but wanted to bring you up to date on our family history. News from what



-2-

is left of my former French acquaintances is rather sketchy. Most of them are dead. And our good friend Dwight Eisenhower has passed on. I was on his staff on the UK until the invasion. Now my dear, if I am now presuming upon your time, will you bring me up to date. Helene, my wife is having a foursome this afternoon, shoed me off to a bristo for lunch so after returning, I had in mind to communicate with you.

With many pleasant remembrances,

*Terence C. Looney*

Terence C. Looney  
2201 North Garfield St.  
Little Rock, Arkansas.



Major Honey  
USA Intelligence  
SS. Planter  
Overseas  
1944

Memoirs of events leading up to my arrival  
in Europe in connection with WW II.

In a moderate sized city where we lived, Sunday morning December 7th 1941 was a beautiful one. I had been out to the golf course in the morning but returned home on account rain. That afternoon while reading the Sunday papers and listening to the radio, my life together with millions of other Americans was suddenly changed. This worthy (?) person enjoyed a nice home amidst pleasant surroundings, played golf, fished a little, kept a vegetable garden with flowers. Our house occupies a corner of the block and we took pride in keeping the appearances neat as possible and received many favorable comments for our efforts. We also had a chicken lot. I constructed an electric brooder which was kept in the garage and relayed day old chicks about every 45 days. We sold enough after maturity to pay for the original number of day old chicks bought together with their feed & was amply supplied with fresh eggs and fryers for our table. This idyllic life was changed with the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor with which every one is familiar. Through correspondence courses and attending the two weeks annual training at Ft. Logan Colorado, an engineering post, I finally reached the rank of captain in the engineers reserve. It was there that I met John R. (Cocky) Crume when he first came out of West Point to his first assignment. Since 1924 our paths have crossed many times. The old army clique I guess. At any rate I was finally promoted to the grade of captain. Monday morning, after the Pearl Harbor debacle, I went down to the Engineers Headquarters here where Colonel Crume was the chief engineer. His first words were, "where is your uniform?). I told him I was on my way to Camp Robinson and stopped by to get his advice as to procedure. Before I go any further, I might mention that our son, Jack, had been appointed to West Point and entered the academy in 1935 at the tender age of 17. When my wife and I first visited him there, we found Major Crume was one of Jack's math instructors. Although we were stopping at the reservation hotel, The West Point Thayer, we enjoyed the hospitality of the Crumes at their post quarters. After conferring with Col. Crume, I hied myself to Camp Robinson for a physical. The medics gave me an examination daily for fifteen days then decided I was over age for rank and further disqualified account of persistent hypertension. Two doctor friends here in town would examine me in the morning and my readings were well within required standards then I would take a fourteen mile bus ride to Camp Robinson where by time I was re-examined my blood pressure would shoot up clearly out of line, so I was finally disqualified on that basis. Shortly afterwards while down town dressed in a freshly pressed palm beach suit, a company of soldiers passed and one of them said out of the corner of his mouth, "Hi-sissy". That did it. I was old enough to have been his father, but it got under my skin. My little pal who had never said a word about my trying to get in the service and I knew she would not stand in the way. Jack in the mean time had graduated from the academy and after a short tour at Ft. Benning, thence Ft. Warren, thence to the Aleutians where he had an interesting campaign against the Japs. That accounts for my getting to Europe a year ahead of him. As a coincidental after my soldier friends slurring greeting, there appeared in the local paper, The Democrat" an item



that the OWI was in need of radio operators. As a hobby, I rigged up an amateurs set in my garage thru' which I attained a fair degree of proficiency. I immediately contacted OWI director, Mr. Elmer Davis, gave him my history and in due time found myself in New York for a physical at Marine General Hospital, and a general briefing and short training in army radio. In filling out a form at the Marine General, I stated that so far as I knew, the only dis-ability that I had was high blood pressure. The next day I was instructed to return to the hospital for a further check up. They gave me the works after which the surgeon OK'd the physical says, "There's nothing wrong with your blood pressure". Since that was 20 years ago and I am still around here after some experiences, so I guess there was nothing very much wrong in spite of the Army's examination here. Before I get away from it, Helen, my wife, slipped and fell in the mud while feeding the hens after I left so she marched into the house with as much dignity as possible, called "The Democrat" placed an ad and sold the entire flock. That ended the chicken business any way. They were a nuisance here in town any way. - I was to meet Mr. Davis in Paris later. Here at home, he and Mr. Kaltenborn, the "old goat", were our favourite commentators. After completing my physical and other briefing, we were supposed to attend lectures at Columbia University on security and intelligence by an officer of the army intelligence. I attended only one as the next day I found a note in my box instructing me to be ready to leave for overseas duty tomorrow! Imagine how elated I was. I had previously told Helen that when I called her long distance, that meant I was practically on my way. Every thing was very hush-hush. No one around OWI building knew that I was alerted except the entire force. The next evening several of us left by rail for Montreal. In the party were several Hollywood movie technicians. We spent two days in Montreal a beautiful and interesting old French City. The second day, we were instructed to take a certain route around the city and write our impressions of what we had seen. (I've never seen my IQ on this.) I imagine it was easy for some of the script writers but it bothered me a little. At the embarkation dock we were joined by a team of St. John's Ambulance Battalion nurses and we all departed on the former United Fruit vessel, "The Jamaica Planter", a beautiful and fast vessel. We cruised alone down the St. Lawrence to Sidney where we were to make rendezvous with the main convoy. I shall never forget my first view of that quaint, historic city of Quebec. In the lounge room of the "Planter" there were numerous French-Canadian pamphlets which were interesting and provided us with information about the country through which we were traveling. I have always been interested in history any way. We had pleasant weather down the St. Lawrence which gave us an opportunity to observe the beautiful scenery. Oh yes, also joining us at Montreal were two Scotch girls that had been in Canada for some time and were returning home by reason of reaching their majority. There were no troops on the Planter and only 15 passengers and we all messed with the ships officers and before reaching our destination we became very well acquainted. The two Scotch lassies reached their 18th birthday in mid-Atlantic and with the assistance of the matron and steward we threw a party for them. They received several articles from the mens GI kits accompanied with attempted smart cards of remembrances. The girls seemed to enjoy it all. As a sordid commentary, I was told in London that a number of girls returning to the UK from Canada and America elected to go on record as prostitutes rather than



being sent to war work factories, working under all sorts of conditions and at any place the government choose to send them. Once registered as prostitutes, they could live where they wished, therefore many of them elected to follow the latter course. "Scotty Bell" lived in Edinburg and before we left Oban she sent her father a message to meet her. She said that she hoped to enter a university and train for a laboratory technichian. She spent over four years on a ranch in Manitoba and had become thoroughly "Westernized". Seemed to be concerned about how her parents were going to receive her western manners.. Evidently there had been some correspondence on the subject. She used to go around the deck dressed in a flaming red checked blazer and blue dungarees and walked with a distinct swagger. One would never know that she had been born in Scotland. Those St. Johns Ambulance girls were in charge of "Bess Pitts", a former athletic instructor at Bryn Mawr and a charming person. There were no troops on the ship except a Canadian gun crew and I was dycing to leave our deck and go over and look at that gun. The officers were very strict and kept us herded in the forward area which included lounging and mess facilities. The first two or three days about we could drape out in shorts and army blankets on the deck. After the third day out when we made rendezvous with the main convoy, the weather was rough, rain sleet and fog. As we weretaking the northern route to England we naturally ran into cold weather even at that time of year. When we made our rend ezvous with the main convoy, it was a sight I will never forget. There must have been at least 100 vessels chaperoned by 3 flat tops, two or three cruisers and a herd of Canadian corvettes which circled around the convpy continuously. It was a mystery to me how those little wasp planes from those carriers and land back in the fog like a wasp. In addition to the St. Johns Ambulance Bn, we had about a dozen Hollywood photographers, script writer, etc. After leaving Montreal we were assigned tables for the remainder of the voyage. At my table was Willman Martin, linguist, a very pretty Canadian nurse and a nutty stenographer from New Yark. She kept our table in a state of wonderment, for instance one day speaking of her boy friend, she said that they had met biologically! Martin and I d-n near choked and that can-nuck looked at her with amzement, then the N S tried to clear that up by saying they met in the biological class. Assigned in my state-room was a Mr. Bell, (No kin to scot ty), and a ships radio operator Frazer. Bell was someway connected with the UK government & we spent considerable time together in the lounge room & out on deck until the weather got too rough. Prior to the war he was with some English outfit as construction engineer in Canada. He knew the ships route well and one morning pointed out that we were only a short distance below Iceland. Frazer had been torpedoed twice & I think it was still on his nerves-but more about him later. We arrived in Oban Scotland about 200Am after having passed thru' the worst fog & rain of the trip.. Our vessela' fog hornsounded every two minutes and it sounded like it was right over me. Oban is in the northern part of Scotland and a very picturesque village. Sometime during the night, the Planter was disengaged from the main convoy and put into Oban. I awoke at the crack of dawn and never witnessed a prettier scene. The Planter was painted a clear white unlike the grey of other freighters and convoy ships so the scene that I viewed that morning was that she was lying in a beautiful loch, not a ripple on the water and the entire country side, except the entrance to the loch,

21.5



surrounded by lofty green mountains right down to the shore. There sat our white ship more like a swan. With the exception of our ship the scene reminded me of the upper lake region of Sugarite, New Mexico where Raton gets its water supply, and with another exception the region around Oban was very much larger. We were not permitted to bring cameras with us. Our luggage was thoroughly inspected at Montreal in this respect. Well soon after I appeared on deck, Mr. Bell showed up. He was an early riser like myself. He pointed out up on the mountains where the Scotsmen had been making for centuries and still are, Scotch whiskey without paying taxes to the government. When the English raiders attempted to go up the slopes to raid them, the Scotsmen would drive the bloody Englishmen, back down to the water, "those that could walk". The quotation is from Mr. Bell as a true Scotsman, I imagine his sympathies are with the whiskey makers. Right after breakfast, we were placed with our luggage (which was 'nt very much) on a lighter for the Ozancustom house, about six miles. Going thru' the customs was merely a matter of form as we had our necessary credentials from Montreal, so after getting our American money exchanged for British "pounds" and passports visaed, Bell, Frazer and I set out to see the village. It was on this that I wished I had a camera of some kind. Our train for London was scheduled to leave at 300Pm and we were advised at the customs office to provide ourselves with sandwiches and drink plenty of water as neither would be available on the train. So we procured the sandwiches, GOK what they were made of but tasted something like dried crushed whale meat & potatoe bread. I got an extra portion of bread from the waitress, no butter or dressing of any sort. I had seen one of those LMStrains at the Chicago exhibit and I think we had one of their standard trains. Naturally according~~ly~~ to previous occupation, prior to the departure of the train I walked down to the "head end" & after showing the "driver" my American passes, he introduced me to the starting officials and invited me to ride the engine. After looking at the locomotive, I decided I would take my place in the compartment. On those locomotives there is no place for one to sit and as I had little sleep the night before, I declined. We left Oban promptly at 300 o'clock and for about five hours had a wonderful view of the Scotch scenery. This little tea pot engine with high wheels ran like the mill tails. Somewhere during the night we picked up a helper engine. They did not have baggage men on the train & we had to look out for our own baggage even to placing it in the baggage car and taking it out. At Sterling, we changed trains for London with about a four hour wait. When we arrived about 600Pm, still very light, Frazer & I transferred our baggage to a truck marked for that evening's train to London then we went for a few minutes of sight seeing and bought a better sandwich than we had secured at Oban. About thirty minutes before the London train was due to leave to arrive we wandered down to the station and observed that our baggage had disappeared. I soon found that the N S and Martin had wired OWI headquarters that we would not arrive until a day later. After giving a porter an American dollar bill, (Frazer paid me back half of this) the porter soon located the baggage in a car that had been set out to be picked up the next day. An American dollar looked big to him and he stayed with our baggage with Frzer and I looking on until the LMsexpress arrived at 1100Pm. Due to being far north & daylight saving time it was very, well light enough to see by time we left Sterling.



see by time we left Sterling. The train did not have any heat & we were in complete blackout. One could not walk in the corridors. I begun to get cold during the night and a RAF who was returning to the front curled up beside me with his overcoat. I am sorry I did not get his name, however in one of our directives from the intelligence people, we were instructed not to write any ones name nor keep a diary. I did not follow these instruction, literally as before we disembarked from the Planter, I used an envelope and secured several autographs which I will quote:

"Scottie Bell-long may yer lum reek" Scottish translation "When the smoke comes out of your house, you're welcome."

Captain Thomas J. Baker, returning home after three years recuperating in Canada after being torpedoed at the beginning of the war.

He and Mr. Bell tried to teach me cribbage- I think he and Bell should stick to their professions, or get a better subject.

W. Martin to Ted Looney (wonder what become of him)

The next two in my notes, I can't read, the third is from our table friend, the steno-"Best Luck-Austin Brown", then the good looking Mary Mackay, SJAB., Mary Nesbit SJAB, Becky Proctor SJAB, E. Sherwood, Eve Searg, & Eve Finch of the SJAB, following to Don Teddy, salute! Johnny Frzer, Molly Hudson, Bess Pitts SJAB "Hello Canada", O. G. Davies 2/E KIA ORA, a good guy to know, he served the bar and his "Jamacia Planters" were out of this world. W. B. Newcomb, Martin Wellman & E. L. Ireland, D. Robertson, steward, who gave me his London address and asked me to pay him a visit, which I never did. Evidently I missed "Nellie Webb" or hers was one of the names that I could not decipher. Chief engineer Davis wrote me this little note on back of envelope "Service De Sa Majestie - O. H. M. S."

"We who sail the seven seas oft ruminate on life's short lease vow and declare without a doubt this trip's my last, I'm getting out Our thoughts then wander on at large perhaps I'll start a garage, or better still I'll buy a farm and anchor there in peace and calm. Just idle thoughts, may well write 'em, we'll carry on ad in finitum" Davis wrote that in long hand on the little bar. I guess he is still in the service unless retired. In retrospect, I sometimes wish that our little party could be in some kind of a clearing association in regards to news. My first view of London was of course from some distance.. Seemed like every available space, golf courses, estate grounds and highways were crowded with all kinds of war materiel. Soon we could see thousands of aluminum barrage ballons glistening in the sun. I said to my self, Oh, Oh, we're in it. For a few days that was the last sun I saw. Brother, those London fogs are the most efficient blackouts I've ever seen, but even so, at night every thing was a complete blackout & I dont see how a cat could get around but as a matter of fact I got around to the extent that I did not have any trouble getting from my warehouse to 52 Cadogan down Oxford street thence Hyde Park to Sloan Square and my room at Cadogan, a distance of about two & a half miles. I did not rate a jeep then. At the beginning of this saga, I stated that I had been employed by the OWI as radio operator, but after my arrival in London and cooling my heels for five days, someone in personnel Ikes headquarters figured I knew something about transportation. I think Frank McSherry T/4 had something to do with that. His Dad was



BG. I didn't ask for it but after five days I received a directive instructing me to report to Major Morley at 160 Gt. Portland Place and that I was being transferred to PWD SHAEF & in uniform. I didn't tap a key while in London but after our arrival in Cherbourg I used to monitor in the press room for a friend while they played poker. After our arrival at Euston Station there was a mad scramble for ones baggage. As per instructions from New York, Frazer & I reported first to the embassy then directed by a person dressed very formally to report to OWI headquarters. Here they seemed to be very much put out because they did not know we were arriving that morning or they would have had a vehicle-limo I suppose and a porter to look after our baggage, but that N S had sent them a message from Sterling that the party were staying over and would arrive in London Sunday morning. Frazer & I were immediately assigned to quarters not far from OWI headquarters, right around from "Willow Run". Wednesday night we heard the most blood curdling sirens and that was because of the initial buzz bombs Hitlers so called secret weapon. No one knew just exactly what they were. The Londoners were jittery anyway from the blitz. Frazer & I walked thru' the park the next morning to our mess and I think I jumped ten feet flat footed when a battery of those pom-poms protected by hedges opened up near us. Then ack-ack began and pretty soon bits of shrapnel began falling down. It was clipping leaves off the trees so we hugged a tree until the firing ceased. It was finally decided that more people were being injured by falling shrapnel than from the bombs themselves so after we had been instructed to wear helmets the authorities decided to discontinue firing at the bombs locally & depend on coast guns and fast planes to down them. The next night when an alert sounded, Frazer & I parted company. He got on my nerves by saying "why are they doing this to us, we are not doing it to them". The next day I arranged to move to 52 Cadogan. He never got over to the continent and I think transferred back to the Merchant Marine as radiom operator. That move made for me a longer trip to Gt. Portland Court but it was worth the move. In my walks, I almost always saw something of interest. Due to a natural ~~daylight~~ late twilight and double day light saving, I've actually read a paper on one of the park benches in Hyde Park at 1030Pm. After walking thru' Hyde Park, I walked two or three blocks along Bromley Road enroute to Sloan Square. Samuel Pepys mentions this road in his diary where he lived after the great fire and recalls that it took him about two hours to go from his residence to the Navy's building in the vicinity of 10 Downing St. after he was promoted to an executive position with the navy. From what I have read, Sam must have been a gay old dog. When I was transferred from OWI to PWD SHAEF, I was issued a green pass reading:

"This Card of Identify certifies that, Name, Rank, Military Identify Card No. or serial number. The bearer of this card will not be interfered within the performance of his duty by the Military Police or any other Military organization. By command of General Eisenhower, sgd-- Col. AGD." Of course I always carried my ASN idente with me but this card stood me in good stead about a year later in Paris. I learned after I returned home that the FBI had investigated me. Right across the hall from where Frazer and I were quartered, there were a bunch of CIC men. After a few night we visited and played pitch. I later saw some of them in Cherbourg and had two out with me to our mess.



I messed with Civil Affairs at Cherbourg and my guests seemed to enjoy it especially as it was a change of surroundings and the CO, Captain Zuber, (judge from Columbus Ohio) kept things alive with his remarks. After taking over the warehouse at Gt. Portland, I was pretty busy getting out supplies and arranging transportation to the continent. Pretty soon I received instructions to go across, assigned to the 6808th Allied Information Team. I have never understood why a change was made in my London assignment for as soon as we arrived at Cherbourg my assignment was changed to Motor Transportation Officer in charge of warehouse and shipping. That was a madhouse but I had good assistance of a sergeant who had had railroad warehouse experience and knew how to line up men. There was sort of a grape vine that if any gold bricking was indulged in, the person involved would be sent to the staging area and subsequently to the combat area. The sergeant had only to send one man to me and after a little talk he turned out to be a good worker. I'm getting away from London or ahead of my getting away from there. After I broke with Frazer I arranged for a billet just off Sloan Square at 52 Cadogan. The girl with whom I talked suggested Grosvenor House which would be nearer to my work at Gt. Portland. Grosvenor House was frequently mentioned as "Willow Run". It was quite a hang out for correspondents, hangers on and what not. I stopped in there one evening looking for Ernie Pyle but learned he had left during the day for Italy. He subsequently left for the South Pacific area and was killed at Okinawa by a Jap snipers bullet. He was a general favorite with the GI's, writing his columns from a GI point of view. When I left Gt. Portland warehouse in the afternoon, I usually rode a double decker bus via Oxford Circle and walked down Oxford Street entering Hyde Park thru' Marble Arch gate just opposite the Great Cumberland Hotel. After you entered the park there is a section reserved for orators, malcontents and religious lecturers. These people are different from the rabble that I have heard around Union Square in New York. They have their little lecturns and expound their views without interruptions. The "Bobbys" never bother them even when they criticised royalty. Rotten Row is thru' the lower end of Hyde Park and it is down that way that aristocrats ride their horses. This is the "West End" area where are located most of the noted apartment houses and family hotels. With the exception of that one V-1 which hit near two occupied lorries one Sunday morning no others hit in that area. That was a mess. When I heard them zooming in, I got close to a tree as I could. The heines were trying to zero in 10 Downing & from then on most of their bombs fell in that vicinity or overshot to Tottenham. Sunday morning June 11th, I attended special prayer services at Westminster Abbey then wandered around the buried from time immemorial. I looked for some time on Chamberlains grave, contemplating. I went down to Picadilly only two times for curiosity and took a good at Trafalgar Square trying to refresh my memory, then a look at the most important war offices & buildings which are in close proximity as well as our communications building and it was in this area that most of the V-1's began to drop. Colonel Roch called me down there one morning, I dont recall what for but while I was talking to him, one of the bombs hit near Baker Hotel about a block from us. The concussion blew out the windows on his side but he never changed





The **Margaret Eaton School Digital Collection** is a not-for-profit resource created in 2014-2015 to assist scholars, researchers, educators, and students to discover the Margaret Eaton School archives housed in the Peter Turkstra Library at Redeemer University College. Copyright of the digital images is the property of Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Canada and the images may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email digital images for individual non-commercial use. To learn more about this project or to search the digital collection, go to <http://libguides.redeemer.ca/mes>.